

S-E-C-R-E-T

19 December 1962

MEMORANDUM FOR: Bureau Chiefs

FROM : Chief, FBIS

SUBJECT : Letter of Information

GENERAL

1. Presidential Use of FBIS Material: The necessity for rapidity in gathering intelligence information can be graphically illustrated by the events of 27 and 28 October 1962 during which the Cuban crisis was at its height. On both mornings President Kennedy was attending meetings of the Executive Committee of the National Security Council when messages from Soviet Premier Khrushchev to him were broadcast by Radio Moscow long before they had been delivered to the White House via normal diplomatic channels.

Since the Saturday and Sunday morning situations were similar in both timing of the broadcasts and means in which the President was informed of the messages, we shall describe only the latter in detail. At 9:04 EST on 28 October Moscow began to broadcast in Russian the text of Premier Khrushchev's message to President Kennedy announcing the Soviet decision to dismantle the Cuban missile bases and return the missiles to the Soviet Union.

FBIS flashed the first announcement on the message to the intelligence community, including the White House, at 9:09 on its interdepartmental teletype service. This was followed at 9:11 by a more substantive alert. By 9:40 an extensive paraphrase of the entire message had cleared the wires; this was followed in the next hour by the complete text as translated from the Russian. Subsequently, the official English text as transmitted by the Soviet news agency TASS was also carried.

The President was given copies of messages almost paragraph by paragraph as they were carried by the monitoring service's teletype network. In an official announcement by the White House shortly after receipt of the text the President said: "I am replying at once to your broadcast message . . . even though the official text has not yet reached me." The Soviet radio audience was apprised of the President's statement the following morning.

In an interview with a CBS television correspondent a month later, Secretary of State Rusk had this to say in answer to a question about the urgency of communications involved in this situation: "I think that there was a question of speed of communications through normal channels. The sheer physical problem of transmitting messages to people who use another language, requiring decoding and translation, with differences in office hours in their respective capitals, did remind us all over again that immediate communications are important; and I think these public communications turned out to be the fastest communications, so that this was, I think, the importance of the broadcast message on October 28. It was a fast response to the President's message of the day before and perhaps

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could not have been handled through the elaborate channels of code and translation and normal diplomatic patterns."

But the most significant statement on the need for rapid communications was made at the President's press conference on 12 December. A reporter asked this question: "Mr. President, the Administration proposed in Geneva today some sort of direct communications between the White House and the Kremlin, either telephone or teletype. Could you tell us what was in your mind in proposing this and how it is related to the Cuban affair and the fact of the delay."

Mr. Kennedy replied: "There was a delay, as you know, in the communications back and forth, in the Cuban affair. In some degree I think on one or two occasions it was necessary to rely on open broadcasts of messages, rather than sending them through the coding procedure which took a number of hours. What was happening was that when we finally concluded our day and sent the messages to the Soviets, they were just waking up, and when they finished their day and prepared their messages for us, we were just waking up. So that it was taking time. The coding procedures were slow.

"In a nuclear age speed is very desirable. ~~We~~ we are hoping that out of this present conversation we can get instantaneous communication or at least relatively instantaneous communication." [redacted]

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2. Key West Post:

a. A new Table of Organization for an augmented Key West Post has been approved by the Office of Personnel. It consists of a Post Chief, three Spanish monitor positions, an electronic technician, and a communications assistant. All six of these positions will be without addition to the FBID T/O ceiling. [redacted]

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b. A specific agreement was worked out with the Chief, Graphics Register, OCR, and members of his staff concerning requirements and arrangements for processing the video tape recordings from Key West. FBID agreed to have the Key West Post airmail a daily 15-minute newscast, plus such special events telecasts as may appear, directly to OCR. OCR, in turn, will amplify its substantive guidance as the project progresses. [redacted]

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restrictions, as well as other considerations, much special liaison work with components of the intelligence community was involved. The significant material in the interview, which had been excluded from the version finally published by the DAILY WORKER, was eventually publicized by a Western news agency on 10 December. [redacted]

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4. Special Headquarters Dissemination:

a. Special dissemination of key items processed by field bureaus and reports published by Headquarters has increased markedly. Khrushchev's 12 December address to the Supreme Soviet is a good example of the former. While the TASS summary and the Moscow Domestic Service text of the speech were being received from London, extra copies were made to supplement the material being made available to the intelligence community via the FBIS Wire Service; these were sent by special courier to the Director and to Secretary Rusk in Paris. The President was briefed on each take of the speech as it was torn off the FBIS teleprinter located in the office of Pierre Salinger in the White House, but not enough of it had been received in time for Mr. Kennedy to comment on it substantively at his press conference. The following morning advance copies of the 43-page section of the Daily Report containing the speech were run off on FBIS' own mimeograph machine; they were forwarded to the DCI, the DDCI, the DD/I, the National Security Council and the White House. One of the copies for the latter was given to the President and another advance copy was sent to the Secretary of Defense. [redacted]

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b. Considerable use is made of individual items processed by field bureaus which do not appear in the DAILY REPORT or on the Wire Service, not only by RPB but also by consumers who receive copies of these so-called discards. During the past month selected "discards" from the Wire Service have been put to very good use by USIA analysts who have been ~~preparing daily reports on certain phases of Moscow and Havana propaganda~~ for the personal attention of USIA Director Murrow. [redacted]

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5. FBIS Wire Service: On 7 December, the 21st anniversary of the FBIS Wire Service's inauguration, the USAF Weapons System Command Headquarters at Andrews AFB was added to the list of over 30 recipients of this 24-hour-a-day service. [redacted]

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6. Cuban Propaganda Report: Radio Propaganda Report CD. 218 of 7 December, "Changing Pattern of Fidel Castro's Public Statements," was issued as report No. 2 in RPB's new series on the content of Havana media. This report reviewed Castro's speeches since the middle of the year, noting in particular a new tone of confidence and bravado coinciding with Raul Castro's return from a visit to the Soviet Union that is assumed to have involved planning for the emplacement of Soviet missiles in Cuba. [redacted]

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7. Description of RPB Files: A revised, updated edition of a January 1960 booklet describing the content of FBIS files on communist bloc propaganda was issued for distribution to selected consumers. The new edition contains a listing of categories used in the War Themes card file, which now contains some 15,000 extracts of Soviet and Chinese Communist leaders' statements. Copies of the booklet will be sent to bureaus monitoring Soviet and CPR transmitters, for background information. []

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8. Disarmament Conference Support: Texts of significant monitored items supplied by field bureaus, supplemented by RPB analysis-support cables, continued to be provided to the Agency representative with the U.S. disarmament delegation in Geneva. []

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9. Area Specialists' Meetings: RPB analysts represented FBIS at the first two in a series of meetings of Agency area specialists, designed to acquaint them with U.S. policy positions and to promote a wider interchange of ideas. The first meeting, on China, was addressed by Averell Harriman shortly before his departure for the Sino-Indian border area as head of a fact-finding mission for the President. The second, on the Near and Middle East, was addressed by Phillips Talbot, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs. []

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10. Special Requirements:

a. Special requirements during the month included a request from Mc George Bundy's office for reaction to a proposal by the Swedish delegate to the Geneva Disarmament Conference; tearsheets of Daily Report items reflecting Afro-Asian reaction to the Sino-Indian conflict in support of a reaction roundup being prepared by the Department of State; a Key West tape recording of a speech by the Cuban Minister of Education, for playback by the Department of State to OAS representatives; information on Cuban electronic facilities for an ORR project; coverage of the World War II resistance fighters conference at Oxford for the Agency Historian; and support for several OTR projects. []

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b. A Special Memorandum for the DD/I, issued on 3 November, reviewed Latin American press and radio reaction to the Cuban crisis. []

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c. The text of Premier Khrushchev's 19 November report to the CPSU Central Committee Plenum was published as an area supplement on 21 November. []

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d. The Office of Research and Reports asked FBID on 5 November for the updating of a 1960 "Electronic Facilities Study" of Cuba. []

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11. Hong Kong Survey: West Coast Bureau has completed summarizing belts of Chinese regional programs recorded by the Hong Kong survey team, and the contents are being evaluated. An overall report of the survey has been completed by the team chief, [redacted]. The team found that seventeen provinces in the south and central portions of the CFR are monitorable from Hong Kong, but such monitoring from Taipei is impossible because of interference from Nationalist transmitters. The survey results will be passed to the BBC, along with a statement that FBIS continues to view permanent Hong Kong monitoring as a BBC responsibility under the reciprocal FBIS-BBC relationships. [redacted]

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12. Automatic Data Processing: A team from the DD/I's Automatic Data Processing Staff toured Headquarters for two days to survey areas where automatic data processing might be useful and feasible. Particular attention was given to the Field Operations Staff, Editorial Branch, and to RPB's Research Support Section. Although the visit represented only an initial survey, the team offered the opinion that RPB's present cumulative file system was the most economical and efficient one possible, since the application of machine processing would involve an expenditure of funds and personnel far out of proportion to the return. They believed that much of the value of the files derives from the constant participation of analyst personnel in the coding and cataloguing, which serves to maintain the currency and relevancy of the files to problems under study. [redacted]

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13. Communications:

a. Field Operations Staff is working closely with Telecommunications Staff, O/C, in pursuit of solutions to communications problems. A plan is under consideration to exchange one of the trans-atlantic allocated radio channels for a full-time duplex submarine cable channel. Current Pacific communications problems are in part traceable to the damage done on Guam to radio installations by Typhoon Karen. DCA has indicated that it will make a full study of trans-Pacific communications in mid-December to seek means of improvement. [redacted]

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b. Bureaus filed one "YY" and 67 "OO" items to Washington during November 1962. Average transit time to Washington (message sign-off to time of receipt) follows: Key West, 16 "OO", 47 minutes; London, 6 "OO", 2 minutes; Mediterranean, 2 "OO", 2 minutes; Okinawa, 1 "YY" (allocated channel) 5 minutes, (same "YY" via common-user circuits, 2 hours 58 minutes), 14 "OO" (allocated channel), 18 minutes, 1 "OO" (common-user), 2 hours 25 minutes; Panama, 3 "OO", 9 minutes.

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14. Security Regulations: American personnel are requested to review all FBIS Regulations on Security, Category Ten. These were distributed to all Bureaus in a black bound manual titled Security Handbook.

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15. FBIS Regulatory Issuances: The following regulatory issuances were disseminated: (Unclassified)

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Engineering and Field Operations

1. Visit by Chief Engineer to Key West: [] Chief STAT
Engineering Staff, visited the Key West Post 15 and 16 November. [] STAT
made a thorough inspection of the Bureau's facilities, particularly the video tape recorder. He also discussed Post problems with appropriate Naval officers. With the easing of Cuban tension, the Navy has removed the ten-kilowatt transmitter, which had caused difficulty with our video recording, from the vicinity of the FBIS Operations Building.

2. Field Comment on Communications Arrangements: Bureaus are encouraged to submit informational reports or observations and/or comments on their respective communications arrangements. The inclusion of details, especially where problems are involved, would greatly assist the Field Operations Staff in evaluating given situations and constructing staff activity in support of Bureaus.

Administration

1. Time and Attendance Reports: Bureaus are reminded that T&As must be submitted each pay period for any employee in a LWOP status. The T&As reporting LWOP should accompany the regular payroll.

2. Personnel:

a. New Employees

Assignment

[]

Editor, USSR & EE Section
Editorial Branch

STAT

Monitor
ECB

Teletypist
Editorial Branch

Analyst, Bloc Foreign Affairs Section
Radio Propaganda Branch

b. Reassignments

From

To

[]

Clerk
Okinawa Bureau

Secretary
Engineering Staff

STAT

Chief
Saigon Bureau

Projects Staff
Editorial Branch

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<u>Reassignments</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>	STAT
<div></div>	Editor East Coast Bureau	Editor London Bureau	
	Senior Editor African Bureau	Liaison Officer Liaison & Requirements St.	
	Editor Editorial Branch	Editor East Coast Bureau	
	Editor West Coast Bureau	Editor Mediterranean Bureau	
	Admin. Officer Mediterranean Bureau	Budget Officer Administrative Staff	
	Publications Editor Editorial Branch	Deputy Chief Mediterranean Bureau	
	Deputy Ch. Engineer Okinawa Bureau	Chief Engineer African Bureau	
	Editor Editorial Branch	Editor Okinawa Bureau	
	Chief Austrian Bureau	Chief, USSR & EE Section Editorial Branch	

3. Resignations

<div></div>	<u>From</u>		STAT
	Mail & File Supv. Administrative Staff		
<div></div>	Secretary Editorial Branch		STAT